Gathering the Nations

The Bible Lesson at a Glance
Isaiah is looking down toward the end of time. He talks of the work of Christians spreading the gospel in many different lands. We can reflect on the work of missionaries down through the ages. God has promised that wherever we are when we work for Him, He will be with us. God promises that those who love and serve Him will be with Him in heaven and will be able to worship Him from one Sabbath to the next.

This is a lesson about service.
God calls us to serve Him by spreading the gospel to every corner of the globe. This lesson could inspire some of your students to find more far-reaching ways to share the good news.

Teacher Enrichment
“Christ gave His disciples their commission. He made full provision for the prosecution of the work, and took upon Himself the responsibility for its success. So long as they obeyed His word, and worked in connection with Him, they could not fail. Go to all nations, He bade them. Go to the farthest part of the habitable globe, but know that My presence will be there. Labor in faith and confidence, for the time will never come when I will forsake you.

“The Saviour’s commission to the disciples included all the believers. It includes all believers in Christ to the end of time. It is a fatal mistake to suppose that the work of saving souls depends alone on the ordained minister. All to whom the heavenly inspiration has come are put in trust with the gospel” (The Desire of Ages, p. 822).

In what ways do I help to spread the good news?
**Welcome**
Welcome students at the door and direct them to their seats. Ask them how their week has been. Encourage learners to study their Sabbath School lesson regularly, and debrief students on the previous lesson to help them see the chronological continuity of the Bible stories from one week to another. Then ask students to share a few things they learned from the current lesson prior to Sabbath School. Ask: **What was the most interesting part of the Bible story? What activity did you find the most helpful?**

Invite students to share their experiences and/or the handiworks they created for Sabbath School during the week. Have students begin the readiness activity of your choice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson Section</th>
<th>Minutes</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Materials Needed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Welcome</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Greet students at door. Ask about their week.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Readiness</td>
<td>10-15</td>
<td>A. Global Learning Center (p. 76)</td>
<td>displays by people from different countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>B. Traveling (p. 76)</td>
<td>pictures of well-known sights around the world OR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C. Someone Who Went (p. 77)</td>
<td>index cards, tape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prayer and Praise</td>
<td>15-20</td>
<td>(p. 77)</td>
<td>songbooks, world map, pushpins, service offering box</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Bible Lesson</td>
<td>15-20</td>
<td>Introducing the Bible Story (p. 78)</td>
<td>Bibles, paper, pens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Experiencing the Story (p. 78)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Exploring the Bible (p. 79)</td>
<td>Bibles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Applying the Lesson</td>
<td>10-15</td>
<td>Brainstorming (p. 79)</td>
<td>paper, pens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Sharing the Lesson</td>
<td>10-15</td>
<td>Good News (p. 80)</td>
<td>paper, pencils/pens/markers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closing</td>
<td></td>
<td>Prayer (p. 80)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reminder to Parents (p. 80)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Next Week’s Lesson (p. 80)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LESSON 7

READINESS ACTIVITIES

Select the activity or activities that are most appropriate for your situation.

A

Global Learning Center

Invite three or four people from different nationalities to come and set up a table with things from their country—if possible, some food that the students might not have tasted before. Make up a fact sheet about the countries represented.

Debriefing

Ask: What did you learn about [insert the names of the countries]? If you could choose a place to which you would like to travel, what place would you choose? Did you know that there is an invitation to travel in the Bible? Isaiah 66:19 is one of the verses in which God invites His disciples to serve Him by going to places where other people don’t know about God, and sharing the good news. Not everyone can travel, but everyone can do missionary work by sharing the good news wherever they are, and trying to find opportunities to support the work in other places. Let’s say together our power text, Matthew 28:19, 20:

“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28:19, 20).

Remember that

We serve by getting involved in God’s work around the world however we can.

B

Traveling

Post pictures of well-known places around the room.

Say: Around the room on the walls are pictures of well-known sights around the world. See how many you can identify.

OR Write the names of well-known countries on index cards. Write the names of their capitals on other index cards. Post all the cards around the room.

Say: Around the room on the walls are names of various countries you know, and their capitals. See if you can match them.

Debriefing

Ask: Where would you choose to travel if you could go anywhere? Why? God gives an invitation to some of His children to travel in His service. Will someone please read Isaiah 66:19? Being a missionary does not always mean traveling to faraway places. But being a Christian does mean being involved in spreading the good news around the world in whatever way we are able. Let’s say together our power text, Matthew 28:19, 20:

“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28:19, 20).

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Someone Who Went
Invite a student missionary or someone else who has served abroad to share a story, unique to the part of the world where they served. Provide time for questions and answers for students to find out about the country and culture where the person served. Close by saying: We might not all have the opportunity to travel to a faraway place, however we can all support the work around the world in one way or another. Let’s say our power text, Matthew 28:19, 20:

“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28:19, 20).

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Fellowship
Allow students to report things that they are pleased or troubled about. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special, warm greeting to all visitors. (Get contact information from the adult who brought him/her to church. Early in the following week, send a postcard or e-mail letting that child know how much you enjoyed having him/her in your class and that you would like to see him/her again.)

Suggested Songs
“Seek Ye First” (He Is Our Song, no. 83)
“Behold, What Manner of Love” (He Is Our Song, no. 42)
“In Moments Like These” (He Is Our Song, no. 147)

Mission
Use Adventist Mission for Youth and Adults (go to www.juniorpowerpoints.org and click on MISSION) or another mission report available to you. For the mission story, have a map of the world where the students can identify the location of the mission story and compare it to where they are. You could use pushpins to mark where the mission story takes place.

Offering
Say: One of the wonderful things about being part of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is that it is a global family. In almost every country you visit, you can find a Seventh-day Adventist. As in every family, different parts need different things. By giving our money we can help those parts of the family that need extra monetary help. But today we are learning that there are other ways we can be supportive as well.

Prayer
Show the students a world map.
Say: When you look at a representation of the world, it is hard to imagine what it is like in [name some places]. The most amazing thing is that God knows and cares just as much about them as He does about you. Let’s choose some specific things we would like to ask God on behalf of the people in those places. Offer prayer also for the students’ joys and sorrows, for the birthday and other special event celebrants, as well as for the visitors.
Introducing the Bible Story
Say: When the ruler, president, king, or queen of a country takes office, there is usually a special ceremony. People travel from all over the world to pay their respects to the new leader. The ceremony is usually shown on TV or the Internet or broadcast on the radio. The prophet Isaiah, looking down through history, wrote about the time when everyone will come to see Jesus enthroned as king in the New Jerusalem. While we are still here on this earth we are commissioned to tell others about this important coming event.

Experiencing the Story
Divide the students into two groups and read Isaiah 66:18-23 responsively.
Divide the students into smaller groups. Ask each group to work together to rewrite the verses in their own words. Suggest that they refer to their power text, Matthew 28:19, 20, as well. Each group will need a secretary and a reporter. Give a time limit. Then have the group reporters read their version to the rest of the class.

Debriefing
Ask: What did you like about your modern paraphrase versions? What did you learn by writing them? What did you learn by hearing others’ interpretations?

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Accommodation for students with special needs
Allow students with special needs who experience difficulty with spelling to express verbally their observations, while another group member records their answers in writing.
Exploring the Bible

You may want to divide the students into smaller groups and give each a text to work with or work with the class as a whole. If you choose to have students work in groups, provide handouts with the Bible references and questions.

Say: There are many people in Bible times who worked as missionaries. Let’s look at some of them and see what they did and how they were received.

1. Jonah 1:1-3, and chapters 3 and 4. How did people respond to Jonah? How did Jonah respond to the people? What was wrong with Jonah’s attitude? Just because Jonah was a missionary did that mean that he knew everything or did everything right? What qualifications do you think are needed for a missionary?

2. Matthew 10. How would you summarize Jesus’ instructions to the disciples? What qualifications can you list for being a missionary? What changed later to widen the scope of their missionary work?

3. Acts 8:26-40. The obvious missionary in this story is Philip. How do you think the Ethiopian became a missionary? Can you be a missionary in your own country? Based on this story, what qualifications can you list for being a missionary?

4. 2 Kings 5:1-6. How was the little maid a missionary? What does this teach us about the circumstances of being a missionary? What kind of age limit is there on being a missionary? What qualifications can you list for being a missionary?

If the students have worked in separate groups, allow time for them to report back to the class. Together, compile a master list of the qualifications needed for being a missionary.

Brainstorming

Rather than giving the students scenarios, have a brainstorming session on how each of the students can be a missionary and what projects they could start. Encourage them to voice ideas about how they could make a difference in the lives of people both locally and abroad. They may mention prayer and offerings, but encourage new and creative ideas such as the Internet and Bible correspondence lessons on CD-Rom. Another idea is to send a card to a missionary.

Debriefing

After the brainstorming, choose one of the ideas to serve as a class mission project. Work together as a class to reach out locally or to raise funds to send abroad.
Good News
Allow students to share their experiences from last week if they had the opportunity to send a letter or an e-mail to someone working as a missionary in another country.

Say: Jesus brought good news to the people He met. We have the same task to tell others that Jesus brings joy. Today we are going to create a good-news report that we can give to our friends. Each of you is responsible for telling the good news of Jesus and how He brings joy into our lives today. You can tell this good news in the form of a story, picture series, or poem. (Remind the students: The good news is that Jesus came to die in our place, to forgive us, to offer us a new life empowered by the Holy Spirit in which we learn to live, free of the “chains” of sinful habits, and eventually with Him in heaven, when all the hurt caused by sin will have been totally wiped out.)

Debriefing
Ask: What can you do to help spread the good news of Jesus every day? Who is someone whom you can tell about Jesus’ love by sharing the good news message you have created?

We serve by getting involved in God’s work around the world however we can.

Closing
Say: Jesus came to this earth as a missionary. He wants all of us to come and live with Him. We can follow His example by getting involved with God’s work around the world however we can.

Prayer and comments:
Pray that God will reveal His love to each of your students this week, and that they will share that love by loving their neighbor-in-need.

Reminder to parents:
Say: Check out the student Bible study guide to find Parents’ Pages for your use in family worship, or however you wish to use them to spiritually guide your children. You may listen to the podcast of the lesson online at www.juniorpowerpoints.org/podcast.php?channel=1.

Coming up next week:
Say: Jesus is the Creator. God gave Himself to us so we can know His nature and character of love and grace.
LESSON 7

Have you ever dreamed about being a missionary pilot, or a missionary doctor, or a teacher? There are many ways you could serve as a missionary today. Let's discover more.

Brad sat quietly, watching the video from the orphanage that Mr. Murray had brought to chapel. “Jesus had a way of reaching out to everyone He came in contact with,” Mr. Murray said. “It didn’t matter to Him where people were born, what was the color of their skin, or whether they were rich or poor. Jesus loved them all. He gave us a beautiful example of what Isaiah referred to when he said that the Messiah would be a gatherer of nations. Today I’d like to challenge you to give even more than your offering to help spread His love. Think about giving yourselves! I’ll be going back down to the orphanage this spring after school’s out. I’d love to take you with me!”

*   *   *

The little boy grabbed the metal tape measure sitting on the board, and ran. “Hey! Come back here!” Brad called after him. It was no use. He was gone. The young boys had a way of seeming to almost disappear once they had grabbed a tool belonging to the academy group helping to build a house for the newly opened orphanage. Many of the children there were street children. Some had no memory of a parent at all. “I wonder what his name is?” Brad thought.

“How can you do this?” Brad asked Carlene, a housemother for six little boys.

“It’s a challenge!” she answered.

“Most of these kids have never had any kind of a family life. Stealing is a way of life for them. They sell their stolen goods for food. We have to live one moment at a time, asking Jesus for wisdom and love for His precious children.”

Brad learned that the little boy’s name was Dominique. “Lord Jesus,” Brad prayed, “please show me a way to reach Dominique with Your love.”

The next morning Brad saw the little fellow again. “Hi!” Brad smiled, reaching for a cookie his mom had sent with him. “Dominique, would you like a cookie?” Startled that the young man knew his name, the boy just stood there. “Here,” Brad coaxed. Dominique took the little treat and smiled back.

Each day Brad tried to find little ways to give Dominique extra attention. He read the boy Bible stories. Sometimes they wrestled and played together. The two weeks of work time went by quickly, and all too soon it was time for Brad to leave. “I wish I had something to give Dominique,” Brad thought. Then he remembered a bookmark in his Bible. Smiling, Brad took it out, and wrote on the back. “To Dominique. Jesus loves you, and I do too. Love, Brad.”

As they loaded up the vans, Brad saw Dominique holding his only toy, a little stuffed dog. Taking Dominique on his lap, he said, “I have a little present for you.” He handed the bookmark to Dominique. “I have to go now, but I’ll always remember you!” Brad hugged the boy and stood up to go.

Suddenly Dominique put his little dog into Brad’s hands. “This is to remember me.”

Today Brad sends money each month to help cover expenses for Dominique. He hopes to go back as a student missionary to work at the orphanage. And a little toy dog sits on his desk.

All around our world today missionaries are sharing the gospel. In places where there are no Adventist churches, such as parts of Cambodia, a missionary family lives like the people of the area. Helping with medical needs, they are able to share the love of Jesus in simple ways, and they hope to reach many villages that have never heard the gospel of joy before.

In the Solomon Islands of the Pacific another family enters a village, presents a simple skit, sings to the people, and then preaches the good news of Jesus. A man in Myanmar who was once a Buddhist has now found the joy of knowing Jesus, because of Adventist World Radio.

Jesus’ call to His disciples more than 2,000 years ago is His call to each of us today: “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28:19, 20).

There are many ways to share the good news of Jesus in the world today. People are needed who are willing to give of themselves for God’s good news to be shared. One day soon people from all nations will be gathered together to worship with Jesus from one Sabbath to another in heaven. What will you do to help others be there?
**KEY REFERENCES**

- Isaiah 66:18-23
- *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 9, pp. 182-186
- Our Beliefs nos. 13, 17, 21

**POWER TEXT**

“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28:19, 20).

**POWER POINT**

We serve by getting involved in God’s work around the world however we can.

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**Sabbath**

LEARN Start memorizing the power text.

DO Do the activity on page 60.

**Sunday**

READ Read this week’s lesson, “Gathering the Nations.”

WRITE Write out your power text creatively and place it where you can review it all week.

LEARN Begin to learn the power text. Repeat it every day.

PRAY Pray that you will find mission opportunities where you are.

**Monday**

READ Read Isaiah 66:18-23.

LEARN If possible, visit www.adventist.org on the Internet to learn more about the worldwide church.

WRITE Send a letter to a missionary in another country.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Pray for someone working in the mission field.

**Tuesday**

READ Read Matthew 10:1-16.

IMAGINE Imagine that you are a reporter. Write an interview with one of the disciples when they returned from their first missionary trip.

RESEARCH Find out about a country that you would like to visit as a missionary.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God for opportunities to serve Him where you are.

**Wednesday**


DISCOVER In the book of Acts or on a map at the back of your Bible, discover where Paul and Barnabas went. How many missionary journeys did Paul make?

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Thank God for people who travel with the gospel.

**Thursday**

READ Read Acts 8:26-40.

FIND Find Ethiopia on a map. What can you discover about the country and missionary work there?

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Choose a country and pray for the mission work in that country.

**Friday**

READ Read the story “Gathering the Nations” with your family at worship.

ASK Ask your parents to tell you how your family first came into contact with Seventh-day Adventists.

DISCUSS As a family, discuss how you can be missionaries to people who live near you. Plan a project that you can be involved with that affects people far away from you.

REVIEW Review the power text.

SING Sing a song of praise that you would like to sing when you get to heaven.

PRAY Thank God for calling you to be a missionary for Him. Tell Jesus that you are willing to share Him with those around you.